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ABSTRACT

Noting that no one approach to reading instruction is "best" for every child, this booklet discusses the "reading styles" approach, which matches instructional approaches to each child's particular strengths and weaknesses in reading. The first section of the booklet discusses the urgency of the issue of low reading achievement among America's children and the importance of matching reading instruction to students' styles. The second section of the booklet describes the work of Marie Carbo and the National Reading Styles Institute (NRSI) in developing the Reading Style Inventory and the Carbo Recorded-Book Method. The next section of the booklet presents research which indicates that the process of assessing and matching students' reading styles results in significant increases on standardized tests of reading achievement for students at all educational levels. The fourth section of the booklet discuses NRSI training opportunities--presentations, videotapes, seminars, annual conference, on-site training, model schools, and training of trainers. A concluding section summarizes the research-based claims for the success of the reading styles approach. Contains 29 endnotes. (RS)

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THE POWER OF READING STYLES

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THE POWER OF READING STYLES

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THE URGENCY OF THE ISSUE

THE NEED

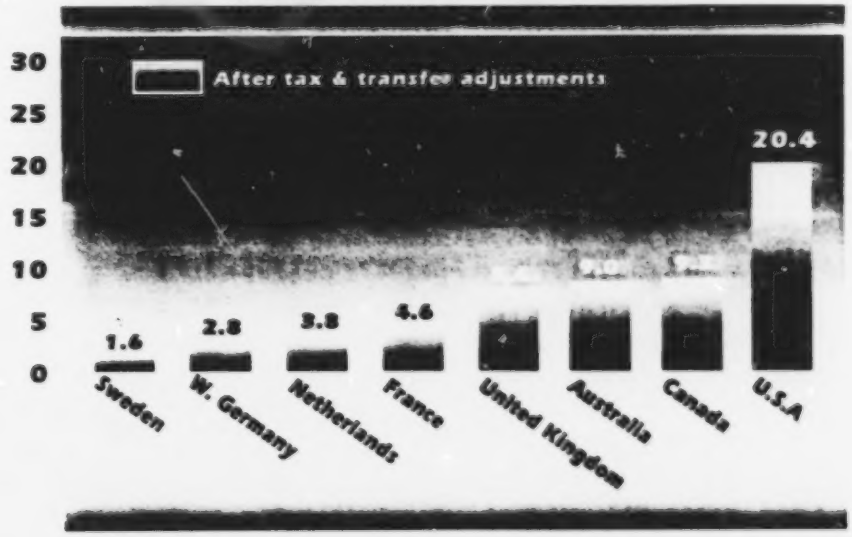
Current levels of reading achievement in the United States fall woefully short of what is needed in the workplace, in colleges, and in the international arena. A high level of literacy is essential in our society, but low reading ability retards the opportunities of countless young people.

A study performed in 1990 by the National Assessment of Educational Progress found that today's children read very little, either in or out of school. Access to reading materials in the home has declined, and library use has decreased.

And more than ever, children desperately need the increased life chances that reading helps to make possible. Noted demographer Harold Hodgkinson tells us that about one-third of preschool children are destined for school failure because of poverty, neglect, sickness, handicapping conditions, and lack of adult care. Children from dysfunctional families are more likely to drop out of school than their more privileged peers, less likely to find jobs and go on to college.

Children with few advantages in life need all the help they can get. The ability to read provides a child with an enormous boost in school and in life. To increase literacy, students must become motivated to read. They must see reading as pleasurable and easy. They must see reading as something that they can do—and that they *want* to do.

Percentage of Children Living in Poverty In Industrialized Nations: 1991



Source: United Nations Children's Fund

THE READING STYLES APPROACH

For more than a century, reading instruction in the United States has swung from analytic methods (such as phonics) to global approaches (such as whole language). These pendulum-like swings in instructional philosophy have tended to treat all students alike, disregarding their natural learning styles, as well as their reading styles.

It is important to understand that no single reading method is "best" for every child. Children possess a wide range of strengths and abilities; teachers need to master a similarly wide range of strategies so that they can match their instructional approach to the most appropriate way of engaging each child.

"Reading styles" is the application of learning styles theory to the teaching of reading. Reading styles refers to how the ability to read is affected by a person's unique style of processing information; his or her emotional, sociological, and physical preferences; and the reading environment. Taking a student's reading style into account enhances student motivation, minimizes failure, and speeds progress.

Dr. Marie Carbo originated the concept of reading styles during the 1970's. Her award-winning research investigated the specific strengths required of the learner by each reading method, strategy, or set of materials.

It is important to understand that no single reading method is "best" for every child.

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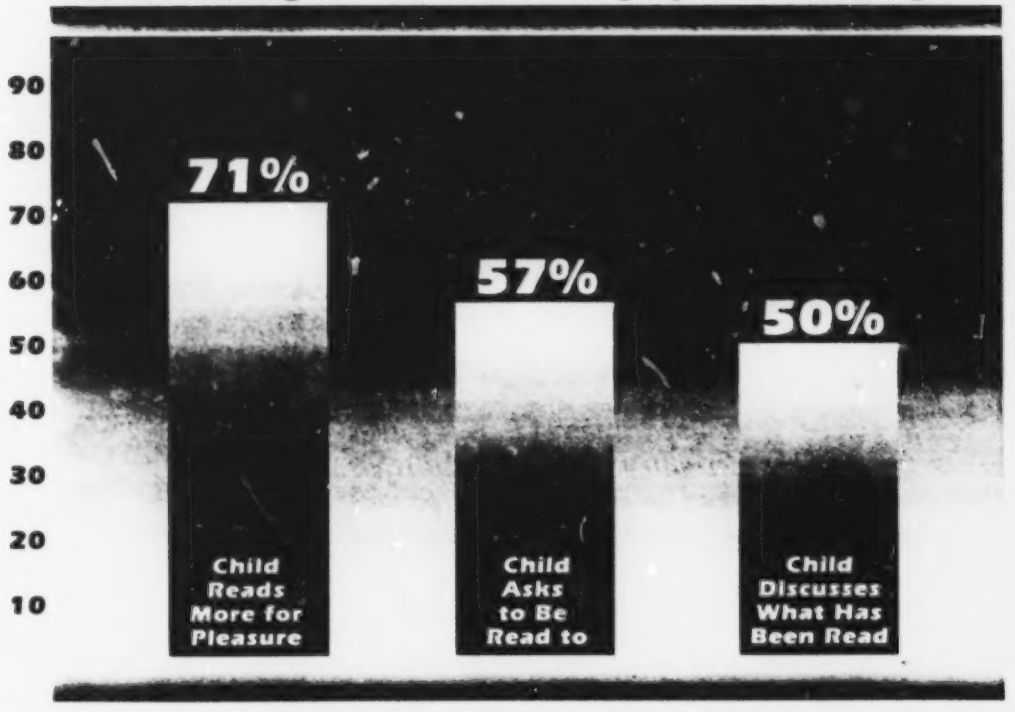
THE RESULTS

The primary goals of instruction grounded in an attention to students' unique reading styles are to instill a love of reading and to prevent unnecessary failure, thus accelerating appreciably the child's ability to learn to read. The third section of this little book reports the findings of many reading styles projects. These research results suggest that:

- Students in reading styles programs are *far more motivated to read* and *enjoy school more* than those in programs that do not include an attention to reading styles.
- Teachers trained in reading styles use a *wider range of reading strategies that capitalize on students' strengths* than teachers not trained in reading styles.
- Students in reading styles programs demonstrate *significantly higher gains in reading* than students not enrolled in reading styles programs.
- Parents of students in reading styles programs report an *increased amount of reading at home* and more frequent discussion of what their children are reading.

Percentage of Parents Reporting Child's Improved Attitudes Toward Reading as a Result of Reading Styles Summer Program



One hundred twenty parents responded to a questionnaire following a six-week summer program for below-level readers.
Source: Lake Washington (WA) School District.

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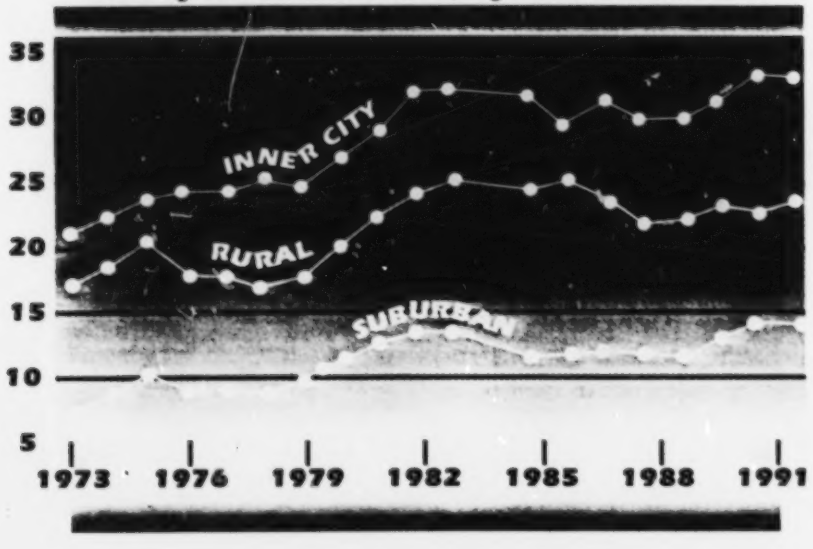
The problems faced by young people outside the schoolhouse walls continue to mount—and so do the numbers of students who lag so far behind their peers in reading and language development that they have abandoned any hope of catching up.[1] To make the problem worse, disproportionately high numbers of minority, immigrant, and poor children can be found consistently ranked in the lower third in U.S. schools.

Note: The "Norman Rockwell family"—with a working father, a housewife mother who looks after the kids, and two children of school age —now represents only 6% of American households.[2] The kind of family our schools have been accustomed to serving has largely vanished.

Minority and immigrant students have too often been poorly served by U.S. schools. And today, "the consistently low achievement of young people in these groups is exacerbated by the increasing numbers of Americans who are barely subsisting amid dire economic conditions."[3] By the year 2000, one in three students in American schools "will be from a minority group representing diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds"; already, in fact, the term "minority" no longer applies in some portions of the United States.[4] Hodgkinson has pointed out that among the most urgent (and largely unmet) needs that face U.S. schools are improving the academic performance of the lower third of young people in classrooms and increasing the number of graduates from high school and college.[5]

Poverty Rate for Children, By Area of Residence



Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

The ability to read is a key to surmounting these pressing problems that face our young people. The *in*ability to read has a direct relationship to the school dropout rate; in fact, a study by the Chicago Public Schools found lack of ability to read to be "the single most important factor in predicting which students would drop out of school."[6]

But an increasing number of young people do not see the connection between literacy and a better life. In fact, too many youngsters do not think of literacy, period. The 1990 NAEP study revealed that access to and interest in reading materials have declined in recent years; even more disturbing was the sharp increase in the number of students who *never* read for fun. These data suggest that students are being assigned more reading in school, but that more students are actually coming to dislike reading.

Leading young people to perceive reading as enjoyable means making the process of *learning to read* enjoyable. Enjoyment breeds motivation. And with motivation comes the eagerness to read that makes a child a lifelong reader.

Unfortunately, many reading programs actually hamper the reading progress of students. Such programs create poor readers, or even non-readers. For example, many youngsters say that they prefer far fewer workbook activities and highly prefer writing activities, choices of high-interest reading materials, and time to read alone and with peers.

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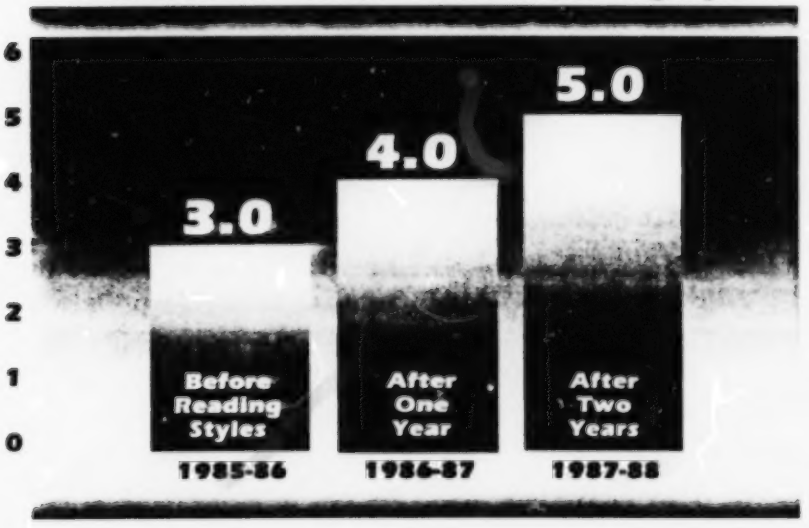
We need to listen to what children want. Why? *When reading instruction has matched, rather than mismatched, students' preferred styles of reading, their reading achievement and enjoyment of reading have tended to increase significantly.*

As Dr. Carbo has observed,

"Researchers and practitioners invariably have found that the students who perform most poorly are the same youngsters whose reading styles are most severely mismatched. When . . . their individual reading styles are accommodated, those same students gain confidence and often make extraordinary gains in reading achievement, and their behavior problems diminish."[8]

Improving the literacy of Americans—both young and old—is absolutely essential. To accomplish this vitally important goal, reading programs nationwide must give every child an equal opportunity to learn to read. *A single reading method or approach cannot serve every child equally well.* Each child's needs and strengths must be taken into account if we wish to create a nation of readers.

Gains in Reading Stanine Scores For All Fifth-Graders After Two Years of Reading Styles



In the summer of 1986, a small group of educators from Bledsoe County (TN) attended the National Reading Styles Conference, then returned to their district and trained a cadre of teachers. More teachers were trained at the 1987 annual conference. Students of the participating teachers advanced two stanines in reading over the two-year period.
Source: Bledsoe County Schools, TN.

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AN APPROACH THAT WORKS

THE FOUNDER

In 1974 Marie Carbo was teaching a group of severely learning-disabled students, many thought to be incapable of learning. She believed that each of them could learn, if only she could find a way to reach them. After months of trial and error, these same students, who had been gaining only two or three months in reading ability in a year, showed an *eight-month gain* in just *six weeks!*

The use of reading styles emphasizes increasing student motivation, decreasing stress during learning, and demonstrating respect for young people.

Most of the poor readers Dr. Carbo encountered had been taught through their weaknesses. Her pioneering techniques used students' natural strengths to help them learn to read quickly—and to experience dramatic gains.

In 1980 Dr. Carbo's research earned the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Two years later she founded the National Reading Styles Institute and, in the process, developed the Reading Style Inventory® (RSI) and the Carbo Recorded-Book™ Method. Since then, NRSI consultants have trained teachers and administrators in reading styles methods in every state in America. Phi Delta Kappa, the pre-eminent professional organization for educators, co-sponsors the annual NRSI National Reading Styles Conference. Districts nationwide are heavily involved in using reading styles.

Articles describing the techniques and results of reading styles have appeared in such diverse journals as *Phi Delta Kappan, Educational Leadership, The Reading Teacher, Teaching Exceptional Children, Theory Into Practice, Journal of Developmental Education, Exceptional Children, Academic Therapy, Learning, Teaching K-8, Early Years, Instructional Leader,* and *National Elementary Principal.*

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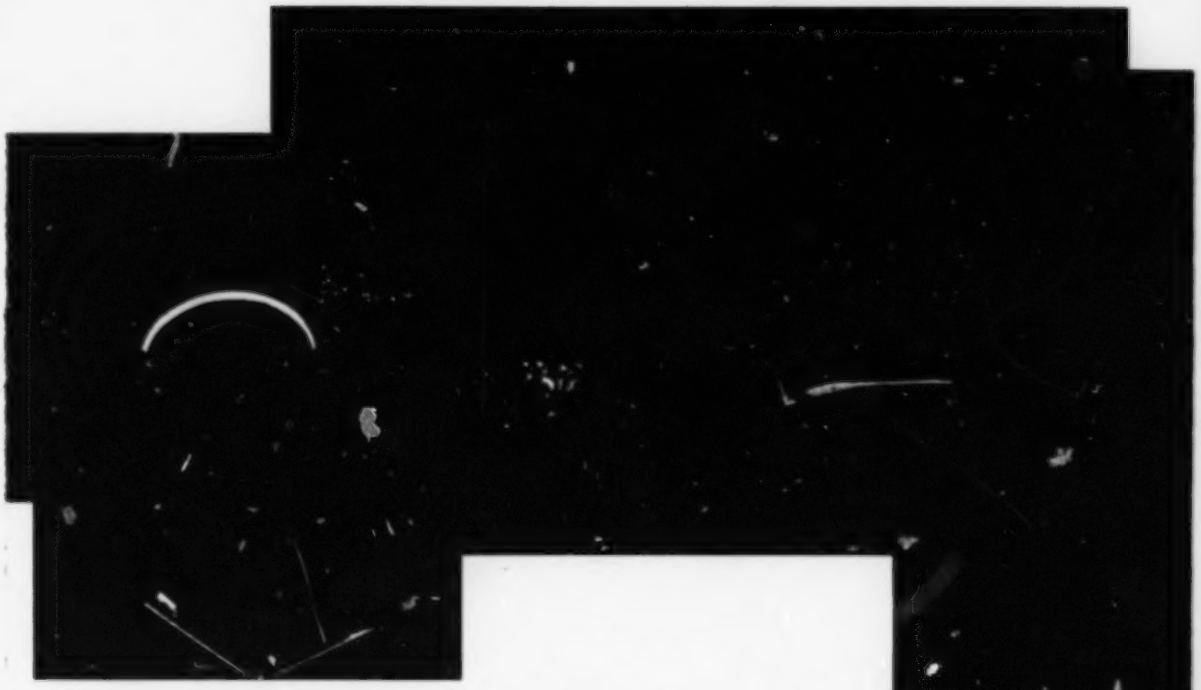

As the noted educator David Elkind has pointed out, young children learn differently; their education "must be in keeping with their unique modes of learning." He added that parents, educators, and legislators largely ignore the data "about how young children learn and how best to teach them."[9] The primary goal of instruction based on reading styles is to use a detailed knowledge of children's unique strengths and differences to minimize reading failure and to accelerate the learning process.

The use of reading styles emphasizes increasing student motivation, decreasing stress during learning, and demonstrating respect for young people. Students are encouraged to read and learn in comfortable, relaxed environments; in a variety of individualized and group settings; with well-written, high-interest reading materials; and with instructional methods that match their strengths and preferences.

The pillars of the work of the National Reading Styles Institute are the Reading Style Inventory® (RSI) and the Carbo Recorded-Book™ Method. The RSI is a powerful yet simple-to-use diagnostic tool. The Carbo Method has the power to produce dramatic reading gains extremely quickly.

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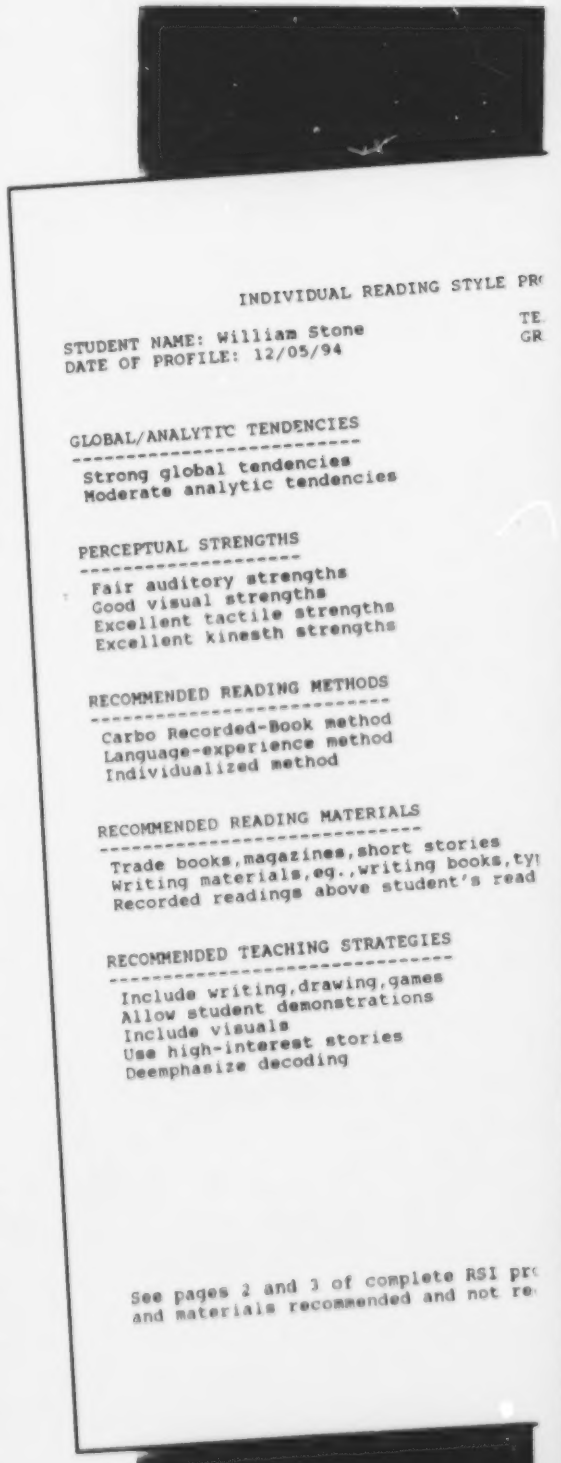
READING STYLE INVENTORY®

In minutes, any student at any level can complete an easy-to-do instrument that provides a wealth of data about his or her reading strengths and preferences. The RSI produces a one-page Condensed Profile (which identifies a student's key strengths and weaknesses and lists the top reading methods, materials, and strategies that match those strengths) and a three-page Complete Profile.

In addition, the RSI Group Profile produces four different kinds of reports for an entire class or for a number of different groupings of students. With the unprecedented power of the RSI, every teacher can:

- **achieve high reading gains quickly with diverse students;**
- **teach to students' strengths, not their weaknesses;**
- **increase motivation and self-esteem immediately;**
- **reduce discipline problems;**
- **write on-target IEP's;**
- **turn parents into willing partners; and**
- **minimize the risk of failure.**

In a review of the RSI that appeared in *The Reading Teacher*, George Mason said, "I foresee wide use of this program with learning-disabled children, those in Chapter 1 compensatory programs, and reading clinic clients."[10] Mason wrote that statement in 1986. Since then, the RSI has been used successfully in all types of reading programs, including regular education.



INDIVIDUAL READING STYLE PR

STUDENT NAME: William Stone
DATE OF PROFILE: 12/05/94

GLOBAL/ANALYTIC TENDENCIES
Strong global tendencies
Moderate analytic tendencies

PERCEPTUAL STRENGTHS
Fair auditory strengths
Good visual strengths
Excellent tactile strengths
Excellent kinesth strengths

RECOMMENDED READING METHODS
Carbo Recorded-Book method
Language-experience method
Individualized method

RECOMMENDED READING MATERIALS
Trade books,magazines,short stories
Writing materials,eg.,writing books,ty
Recorded readings above student's read

RECOMMENDED TEACHING STRATEGIES
Include writing,drawing,games
Allow student demonstrations
Include visuals
Use high-interest stories
Deemphasize decoding

See pages 2 and 3 of complete RSI pr
and materials recommended and not re

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The use of this special technique allows low-level readers to read high-level books with ease. The Carbo Method's special pace and phrasing synchronize the spoken and printed word for emerging or struggling readers. Readers follow along at their leisure and find themselves mastering amazingly advanced material.

The Carbo Recorded-Book™ Method is both remarkably effective and easy to learn. The teacher divides high-interest books and other materials into short segments. Each segment is recorded on a separate tape side, in short phrases, at a slightly slower than usual rate. The student listens repeatedly and, soon thereafter, reads the passage aloud to the teacher.[11]

Why are recorded books so successful in motivating formerly unmotivated readers to embrace reading? First, the handy recordings usually enable any student to read immediately, with ease and fluency, material that is normally well above his or her reading level. Confidence builds quickly. Second (and often for the first time), young people can read something that they find genuinely interesting.

The Carbo Method's special pace and phrasing synchronize the spoken and printed word for emerging or struggling readers.

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SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

NATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY

RESEARCH IN READING STYLES has demonstrated that the process of assessing and matching students' reading styles results in significant increases on standardized tests of reading achievement. The following section of this booklet will describe some of the key research findings on reading styles.

Larry Barber, director of the Phi Delta Kappa Center on Evaluation, Development, and Research, collaborated with Dr. Carbo on a national research study that concluded its first two-year phase in 1993. Data for the study, which were analyzed by Dr. Barber, were drawn from 10 states, representing thousands of urban, inner-city, suburban, and rural students in grades 1-9. The study also examined various ability levels, including students from a school for the severely handicapped.

The purpose of this unprecedented study was to evaluate the effects on students' reading achievement of training classroom teachers in the reading styles strategy. Overall, the experimental group (those using reading styles) made higher gains in reading achievement than did the control group.

The multi-site replicated experiment concluded:

At this time it is defensible to conclude that if the reading styles program is implemented to at least minimum criterion level (85%) and is carried out over a school year, one could expect the children in the reading styles program to obtain consistently higher achievement scores and gains than those children in the extant or control programs.[12]

Data for this nationwide study continue to be collected. As more data become available and new sites are added, the results of the study will be updated.

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PARENTS DEVELOP A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF AND A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCHOOL'S READING PROGRAM.

A study performed in **Bledsoe County (TN)** showed that teachers who use reading styles in their classrooms more systematically inform parents about their children's work and progress in reading.[13] Three teachers included in the study increased their frequency of parent contacts by mid-year from two to 14 contacts, three to 11, and four to 12.

At **Juanita Elementary School**, in Lake Washington (WA), parents responded to a questionnaire after teachers implemented the prescriptions contained in the Reading Style Inventory®.[14] The parents were asked about changes they had observed in their children during a summer program based on the use of reading styles with below-level readers. The parents observed many changes in their children:

- **they read more for pleasure than before—71%**
- **they ask to be read to—57%**
- **they enjoy a wider variety of reading materials—50%**
- **they talk more about what they have read—54%**
- **they're more interested in the library—36%**
- **they enjoy reading more—71%**

These parents of 120 students with reading problems felt that the RSI was "generally accurate for my child" (100%), "of value to me as a parent" (100%), and "helped me better understand my child" (100%).

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STUDENTS LEARN TO READ AT A MUCH FASTER RATE; AT-RISK STUDENTS, IN PARTICULAR, HAVE IMPROVED THEIR READING FROM TWO TO 10 TIMES ABOVE THEIR PREVIOUS RATE.

A year-long research study conducted in 1990 in the Florence (SC) School District by **Sondra Holt** and **Frances O'Tuel** examined the progress of 847 fourth- and fifth-graders.[15] Drs. Holt and O'Tuel found that the reading styles groups scored significantly higher than the control groups on the comprehension and vocabulary subtests of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills and on the Estes Attitude for Reading. The researchers also found significant differences in favor of the reading styles groups on the reading portion of the Basic Skills Assessment Program.

In **Lois LaShell**'s 1986 research study, the experimental subjects could be predicted to make significantly greater gains in reading than the subjects in the control group. The subjects in the control group gained four months in reading during the period of the study; those in the experimental (reading styles) group registered a 15-month gain.[16]

In the **Bledsoe County Schools (TN)**, fourth-graders in the experimental group (those with whom reading styles was used) scored at the 58th percentile on the vocabulary subtest of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP); students in the control group (the non-reading styles group) scored at the 39th percentile. The TCAP total reading percentiles for the two groups were 58 and 38, the TCAP spelling percentiles were 49 and 28, and the "language total" percentiles were 61 and 37.

Reading Levels After Eight Months of Reading Styles Program for Elementary Students With Learning Disabilities

Source: Dr. Lois LaShell, Antioch University, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

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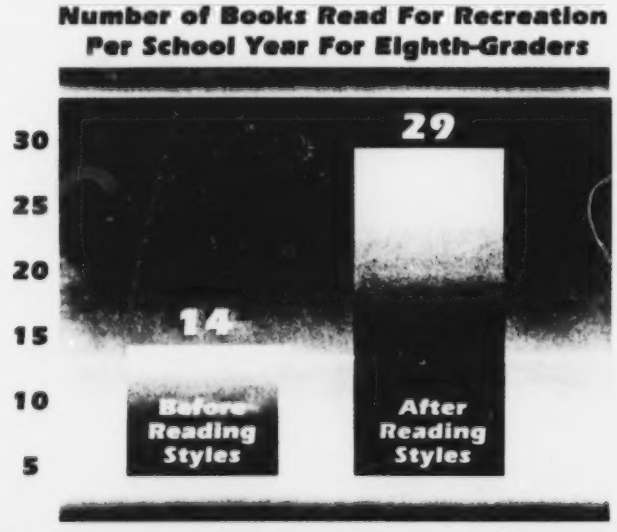
STUDENTS READ MORE BOOKS, BOTH IN SCHOOL AND AT HOME; THEY ARE MORE HIGHLY MOTIVATED TO READ.

In 1990 **Rebecca Thomasson**, supported by a Rockefeller Foundation grant awarded to the Pine Bluff (AR) School District, studied all students in grades K-2 in the 8,000-student district.[17] Dr. Thomasson's study turned up evidence of positive changes in teachers' teaching techniques and methods, as well as positive changes in students' behavior. She observed these phenomena:

- **a 38% increase in peer tutoring;**
- **20% fewer severe disciplinary problems;**
- **a 23% increase in cooperative learning;**
- **a 52% increase in the use of overhead projectors; and**
- **a 17% increase in communication with parents.**

The implementation of the recommendations contained in RSI profiles has altered well-established negative reading habits in extraordinarily brief periods. For instance, following a five-week summer remedial reading program based on students' RSI recommendations, 71% of the youngsters' parents reported that their child read more for pleasure and enjoyed reading more. In fact, the students said that they did not want summer school to end![18]

Evidence of increased recreational reading was noted in the **Bledsoe County (TN)** district-wide study described above. **Ann Snyder** reported numerous positive changes, including a sharp increase in the amount of recreational reading by eighth-graders—traditionally a difficult age group to motivate.[19]



Source: Bledsoe County (TN) Schools, 1991/1992.

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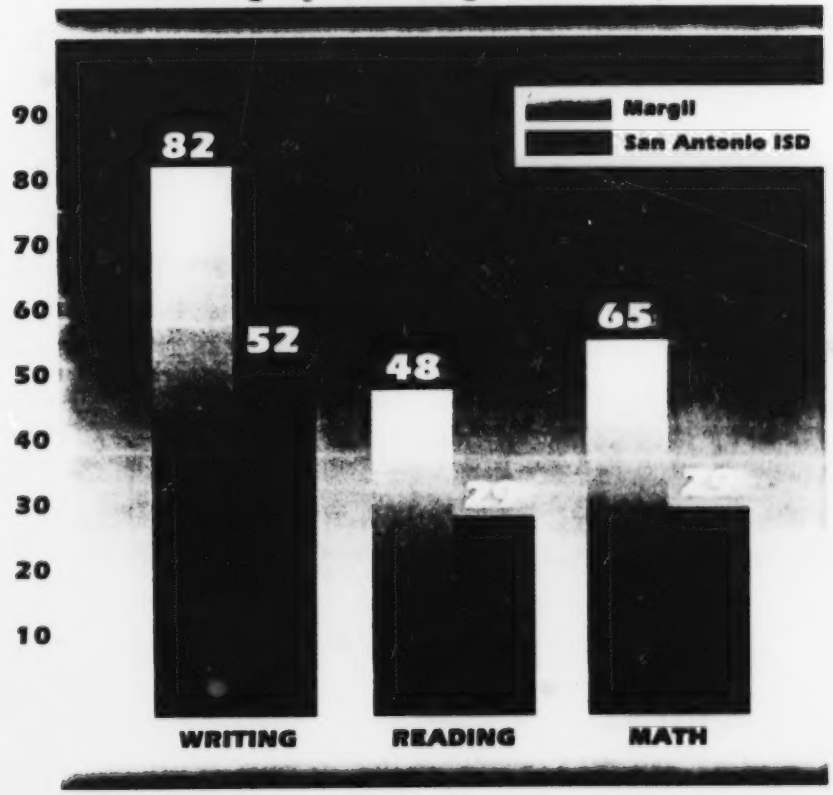
AT-RISK STUDENTS REGISTER REMARKABLE GAINS.

A number of pilot studies in the early 1980's found that students at risk of school failure made high gains in reading comprehension when their teachers used reading styles. A series of one-year studies with matched control groups echoed the results of those pilot studies. In 1986 **Lois LaShell** compared the gain scores in reading comprehension of 90 learning-disabled students in two resource programs. The group using reading styles gained 15 months in reading comprehension, while the control group gained only four months.[20]

Also in 1986, **David Adams** conducted a year-long study of 26 Chapter 1 first-graders in the Shoreline (WA) School District. At the end of the school year, the reading comprehension scores on the Stanford Achievement Test favored the experimental group, whose instruction was based on reading styles. The experimental group moved from the 23rd to the 71st percentile; the control group moved from the 20th to the 26th percentile.[21]

Achievement Scores on the TAAS After Three Years of Reading Styles at Margil Elementary School



After three years of reading styles, Margil surpassed district scores in all basic subjects on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).
Source: San Antonio (TX) I.S.D., 1993.

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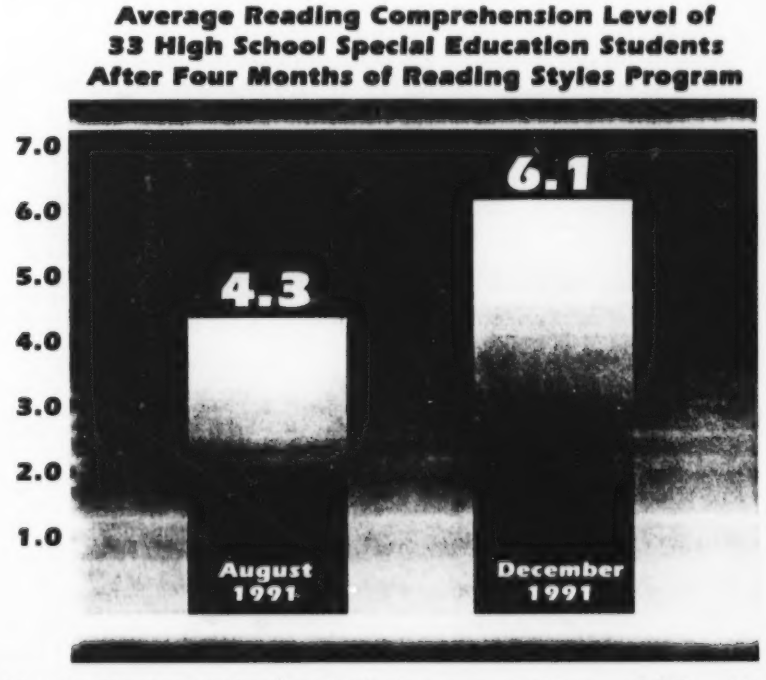
Two years after Dr. LaShell's 1986 study, **AnnMarie Romagnoli** conducted a study with 48 Chapter 1 eighth-graders; the students were randomly assigned to one of two groups. After 10 months of instruction based on reading styles, the experimental group scored significantly higher on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests than did the control group, which had not been exposed to reading styles. The experimental group moved from a reading level of 5.9 to 9.3, while the level of the control group rose only from 5.7 to 6.2 during the same period. Subjects in the experimental group commented in interviews that the reading styles program helped them to "feel at ease for the first time," so that they "did not mind reading aloud any more."[22]

In 1992-93, at **Margil Elementary School** (San Antonio, TX), the number of students designated as "at risk" declined from 302 to 157 in 10 months of working with reading styles. Margil's academic standing improved from 61st to ninth among the 65 elementary schools in the San Antonio Independent School District. (Margil is a school-wide Chapter 1 program. Of the 468 students, 442 qualify for the free-lunch program and 11 for reduced-price lunches.) A sampling of 10 other elementary schools in San Antonio that were implementing a reading styles program showed that their fourth-grade students' scores on the reading portion of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills improved by an average of 32 percentage points from 1992-93 to 1993-94.

Linda Queiruga reported extraordinary gains for her 33 high school special education students. After implementing a reading styles program for only four months, Queiruga recorded a gain of 1.8 years in reading comprehension on the Gates-MacGinitie. Previously, her students had been averaging gains of only a few months over the course of an entire school year.[23]



Report of Linda Queiruga's Reading Styles Program at Canyon del Oro High School.
Source: Amphitheater (AZ) School District, 1991.

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TEACHERS LEARN THE STRENGTHS OF THEIR STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST AT RISK.

Teachers who use reading styles have a powerful tool to discover their students' learning strengths. They learn each student's global and analytic tendencies, perceptual strengths, and much more.

The Reading Style Inventory® makes it easy to identify the learning strengths and weaknesses of groups. At-risk readers have a very definite and identifiable reading style pattern. They tend to be strongly global, tactile and kinesthetic, and in need of mobility and choices. These characteristics are stable; that is, youngsters in grades 3 through 12 and adults who are at risk are most likely to exhibit them.

In 1989 **Sue Mohrmann** used the RSI to identify the reading styles characteristics of 200 remedial reading students in grades 3 through 12 in five school districts in south Texas. Dr. Mohrmann examined cross-sectional data to identify any reading elements that might change with time, as an indication that they might be developmental in nature.

Dr. Mohrmann reported the following characteristics of a majority of the remedial students:

- **Most students preferred a quiet classroom while reading; about one-third could have benefited from background instrumental music.**
- **Brightly lighted classrooms were appropriate for many students in grades 9 through 12, but those remedial students in elementary and middle school preferred dim light.**
- **More than 95% of the students preferred an informal room design while reading.**

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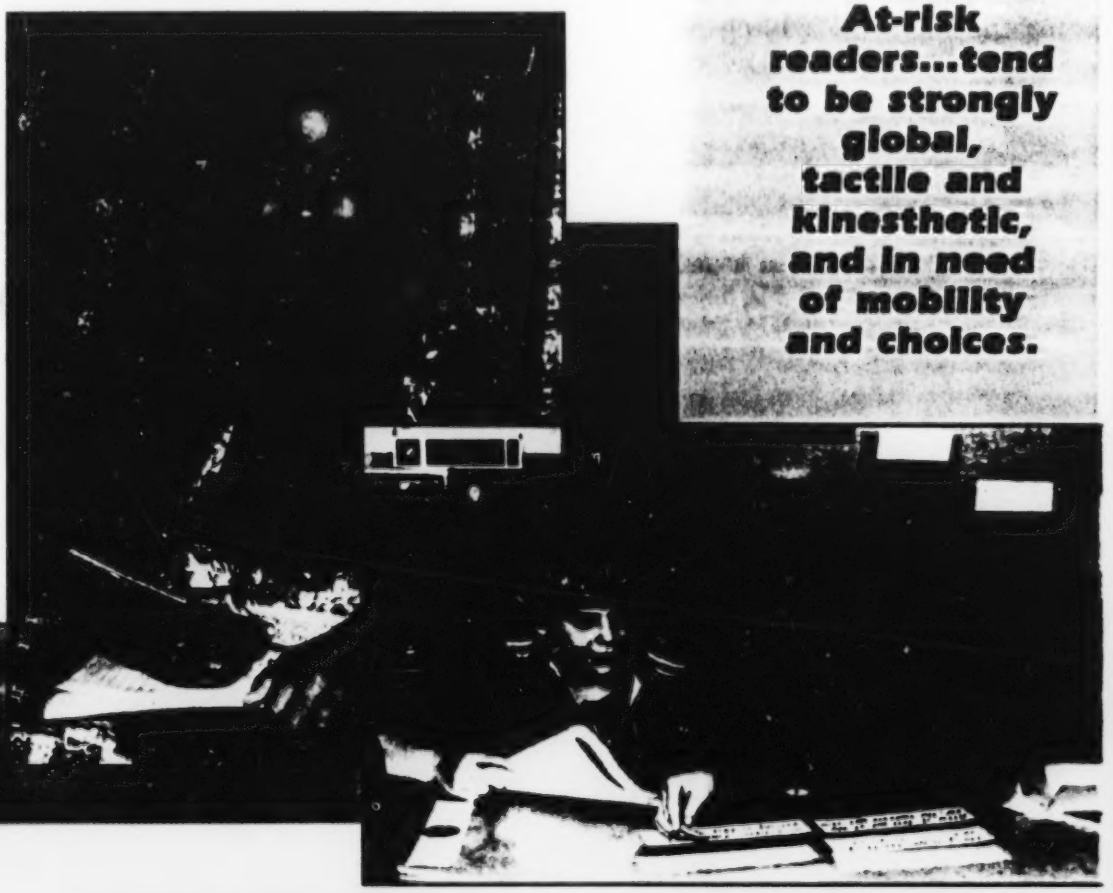
Dr. Mohrmann identified several reading style characteristics of remedial students, among them: global, right-brain processing bias, tactile and kinesthetic modality strengths, and some visual strengths, which increase with age.[24]

In a doctoral study conducted at Temple University, **Mary Sudzina** sought to determine whether random matching or mismatching of the reading styles of 210 students in three different basal programs for one school year produced higher reading achievement. Among the findings reported by Dr. Sudzina are the following:

- **Higher reading achievement occurred when the basal reader program matched, rather than mismatched, the reading styles of the subjects.**
- **The RSI profiles of poor readers identified fewer strengths and recommended significantly fewer reading methods than did the profiles of good readers.**
- **The reading styles of the subjects were matched significantly more often by holistic reading approaches, storybooks, and recorded books than by phonics or whole-word approaches, basal readers, kits, or workbooks.[25]**



At-risk readers...tend to be strongly global, tactile and kinesthetic, and in need of mobility and choices.

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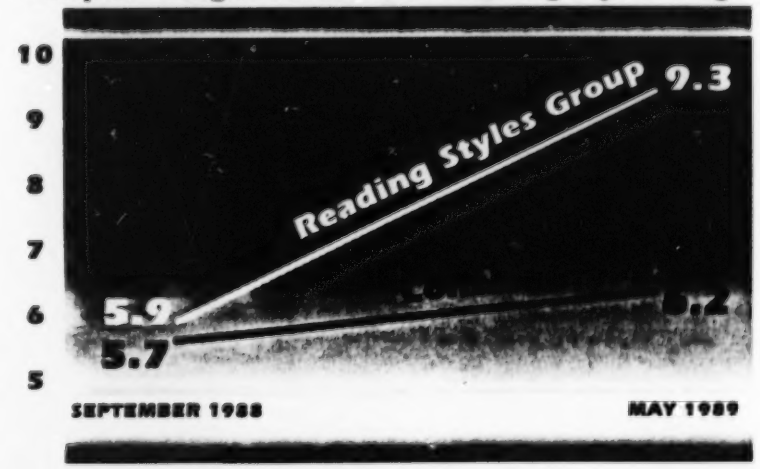
TEACHERS USE THE READING STYLE INVENTORY® AS A GUIDE FOR DESIGNING THE READING ENVIRONMENT, ORDERING READING MATERIALS, AND SELECTING TEACHING STRATEGIES.

RSI profiles recommend the reading methods, materials, and strategies that are most highly compatible with students' strengths. Descriptions of the appropriate reading methods can be printed easily with RSI software.

Teachers use the information provided by RSI profiles as a tool in ordering the most appropriate materials and in planning the most productive instructional approaches. In the primary grades, for example, the most highly recommended reading methods are: individualized, language experience, modeling methods, and the Carbo Recorded-Book™ Method, while the top-rated reading materials are: games, computer software, and recorded books.

Mary Sudzina's 1987 study demonstrated that the most successful readers in all three groups she studied had the highest match between their strengths and the way in which they were currently being taught reading; the least successful readers had the greatest mismatch. The results of her investigation strongly indicate that the good readers in her study had a better chance of succeeding than the poor readers—first, because their primary strengths were better matched by the instruction they were receiving and, second, because the good readers had more chances to be successful than the poorer readers, regardless of their assigned reading treatment.

Gains in Reading Comprehension Levels for Chapter 1 Eighth-Graders in Reading Styles Program



Reported by AnnMarie Romagnoli.
Source: Clarkstown (NY) School District, 1988.

THE USE OF READING STYLES FACILITATES INCLUSION AND INDIVIDUALIZATION.

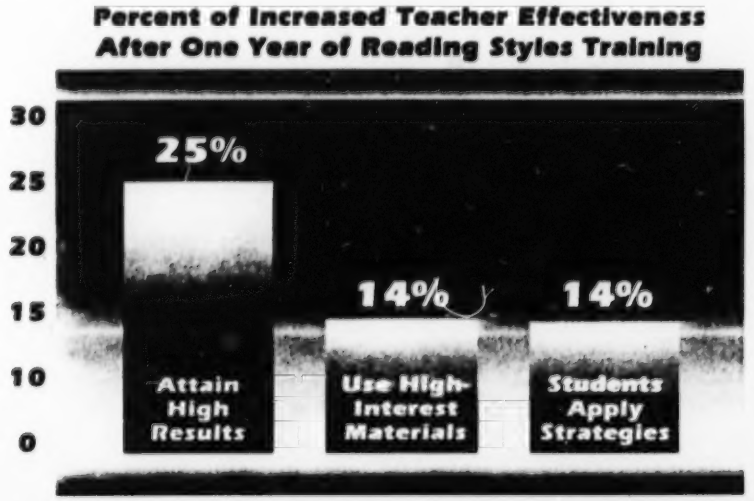
The use of reading styles enables teachers to encourage and plan for more active learning. Reading styles teachers tend to provide a greater variety of choices of high-interest and multi-sensory reading materials.

The recommendations on the Reading Style Inventory® help to focus teachers on the materials, methods, and strategies needed by each student. The RSI makes it easy to become aware of differences: *all* students—not just those in "special education"—have differences that the teacher can measure and work with.

In a research study conducted with the faculty at **Juanita Elementary School** in the Lake Washington (WA) School District, teachers reported that after one year of implementing recommendations from the RSI, they observed:

- **improved results;**
- **a stronger belief in students' differences in learning style;**
- **a heightened belief that different children benefit from differing methods of instruction;**
- **an increased belief in the value of high-interest reading materials; and**
- **a greater belief in the transfer ence of reading skills and teaching techniques to other subject areas.**

Significantly more teachers strongly agreed that students learn differently and were willing to use a variety of methods and materials that matched their students' reading styles. The teachers in this study also developed and/or improved their classroom management techniques and increased their use of audio-visuals, tactile/kinesthetic materials, and computers.[26]



Source: Juanita Elementary School, Lake Washington (WA) Public Schools, 1983.

STUDENTS TAKE GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN WORK; DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS DECREASE SHARPLY.

The 1986 study by **Lois LaShell** addressed the issue of "locus of control"—that is, the degree to which individuals believe they are able to influence the outcome of situations.[27] The experimental group in this study (those using instruction based on reading styles) showed significantly greater improvement in locus of control than did the control group. Subjects in the experimental group could be predicted to make greater gains in internal control than subjects in the control group.

When these portions of Dr. LaShell's study are considered with the findings reported earlier, they lend strong support to the hypothesis that teaching to a student's individual reading style enhances that student's ability to learn. The significant effect on reading achievement and locus of control of matching reading methods to individual reading styles suggests that *no single approach to reading instruction should be used to the exclusion of all others.* Instead, reading methods and materials need to be used to complement the diagnosed reading style strengths and preferences of the learner. In other words, Dr. LaShell's findings suggest *the need for far greater eclecticism in reading instruction* than is found in most reading programs.

Finally, reading styles teachers have been found to have greater expectations for student achievement, their students choose reading as a voluntary activity more frequently, and discipline problems in the classroom diminish.[28]

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NRSI TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

TRAINING IN READING STYLES

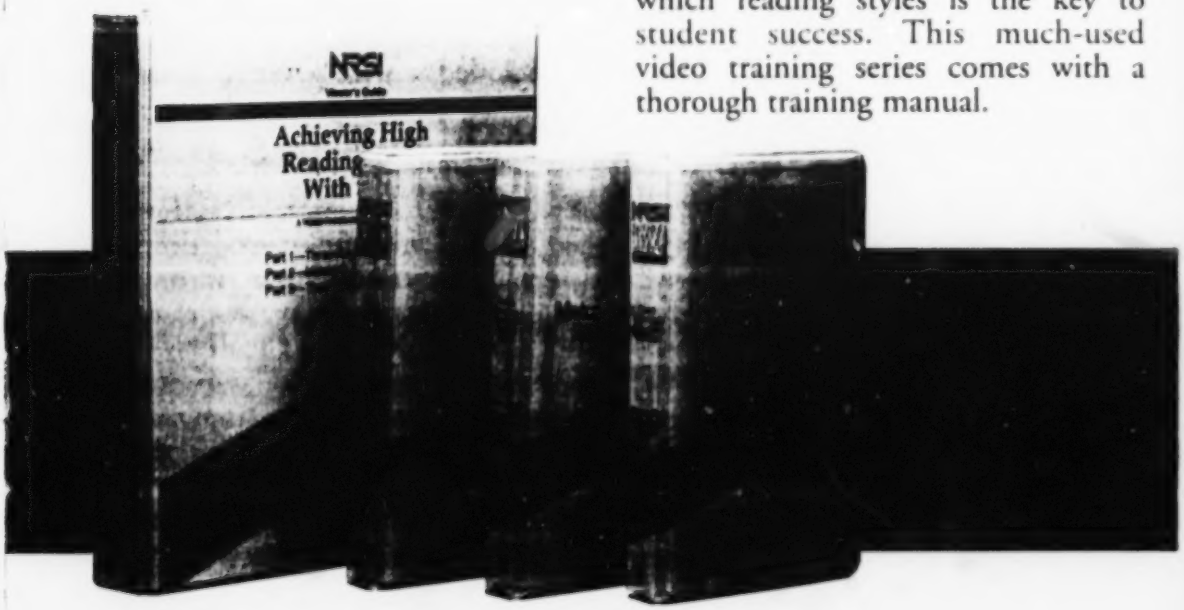
Dr. Carbo and NRSI's national consultants, in addition to several dozen expert trainers all across the U.S., provide a wide range of training opportunities.

Presentations or Keynotes

Through motivational addresses, Dr. Carbo addresses the paradigm shift that is necessary for educators to free their schools from the pendulum-like swings that alternate between an adherence to either phonics or whole-language approaches to reading instruction. NRSI focuses the attention of teachers and administrators on the child as an active learner, and on diagnosing and matching instruction to each child's strengths and needs through a variety of instructional strategies.

Videotapes

Two video series—*Breaking the Cycle of Failure: Marie Carbo's Practical Strategies for Reading Success* and *Achieving High Reading Gains with Style*—provide vivid, timely guidance for educators at all levels. ***Breaking the Cycle*** shows teachers how to overcome the barriers of failure and low self-esteem. Filmed in K-12 multicultural classrooms, this video series demonstrates the specific strategies that account for the phenomenal success of reading styles. ***Achieving High Reading Gains*** also contains scenes from real classrooms in which reading styles is the key to student success. This much-used video training series comes with a thorough training manual.



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Seminars

NRSI offers both one- and two-day seminars that introduce teachers and administrators (and parents, too) to the gains that can be accomplished through the use of reading styles.

A one-day seminar includes attention to assessing and matching students' strengths, increasing fluency and comprehension with the Carbo Recorded-Book™ Method, decreasing visual distortions with colored overlays, motivating tactile learners with hands-on materials, and improving test-taking skills.

A two-day seminar provides: the most effective strategies to use with at-risk students, ways of improving reading programs with the Reading Style Inventory®, successful management ideas, ways of improving a basal series with the use of reading styles, and a series of dynamic, innovative projects that can transform classrooms.

Annual Conference Sponsored by Phi Delta Kappa

For more than a decade, the annual National Reading Styles Conference has included a widely varied menu of different sessions and dozens of expert presenters. The program for each conference contains several different strands that accommodate the particular needs of all educators. The conference emphasizes practical applications of reading styles at the level of the individual school and district; the in-depth training is filled with practical strategies for increasing reading achievement quickly.

On-Site Training

In addition to its conferences and regional seminars, NRSI takes its enormously effective training program right to local districts and individual schools. With NRSI on-site training, teachers learn to assess and match their students' strengths. They learn how to make the most of their teaching time and how to realize unprecedented reading gains fast. The on-site assistance can include evaluations, coaching, short- and long-term planning, and grant advisement.

Model Schools

The NRSI Reading Styles Model Schools Program allows schools and faculty members to work with NRSI consultants over a three-year period to develop the capacity to operate as a national model school. To accomplish this end, NRSI provides up to 15 days of consulting that include training, classroom demonstrations, coaching, and program evaluation.

Training of Trainers

Anyone who has attended the National Reading Styles Conference becomes eligible to take part in NRSI's Training of Trainers program. Those certified at the Basic and Intermediate levels may conduct training in reading styles within their own district; Advanced-level graduates are certified to conduct reading styles training nationwide.

NRSI

National Reading Styles Institute

'AN EQUAL CHANCE'

Years of research from all across the United States support the significance of the rapid results that can be obtained by using reading styles with students of all ages who need help in learning to read. As the Barber-Carbo study has demonstrated, the higher the level of implementation, the greater the likelihood of significant gains in reading.

This body of research enables NRSI to make the following claims, as presented in detail above:

- **At-risk students register remarkable gains.**
- **Teachers learn the strengths of their students, especially those most at risk.**
- **Teachers use the Reading Style Inventory® as a guide for designing the reading environment, ordering reading materials, and selecting teaching strategies.**
- **The use of reading styles facilitates inclusion and individualization.**
- **Students take greater responsibility for their own work; discipline problems decrease sharply.**
- **Parents develop a greater understanding of and a more positive attitude toward the school's reading program.**
- **Students read more books, both in school and at home; they are more highly motivated to read.**
- **Students learn to read at a much faster rate; at-risk students, in particular, have improved their reading from two to 10 times above their previous rate.**

Truly, the work of the National Reading Styles Institute represents an astoundingly successful alternative to the fruitless "great debate" between phonics and whole language in which the field of reading has been trapped for so many decades. As Marie Carbo said:[29]

To improve literacy in this country, reading programs must be refined so that each child is given an equal chance to learn to read. To expect that one reading method, focus, or set of materials can provide that opportunity for every student, or even for most children, is both ingenuous and inequitable. Unless decisive action is taken soon to reverse it, the miseducation of our young will quickly become a spiral of frustration and failure which not only denies the promise of personal fulfillment for many, but also endangers the very fabric of our free society. Let us not make this lesson the longest or hardest to learn.

Dr. Marie Carbo

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ENDNOTES

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28 Marie Carbo, Rita Dunn, and Kenneth Dunn, *Teaching Students to Read Through Their Individual Learning Styles* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1991).

29 Carbo, "Matching Reading Styles. . . ," op. cit., pp. 60-61.

"...when I started to read, I mean, I don't know, it was probably like a miracle. I started laughing because I couldn't help it because I was reading 100 percent better."

J.C., Sixth-Grade Student,
"Igniting the Literacy Revolution"
by Marie Carbo,
Educational Leadership

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